

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUBUMB 00244 041456Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PRS-01 PA-01 DHA-02 L-03

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P R 041425Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2038

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LUBUMBASHI 0244

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: ARREST OF BRITISH AND SPANISH JOURNALISTS

REF: (A) STATE 100274

(B) LONDON 7156

1. CONSULATE RECEIVED INFORMATION ON MAY 1 THROUGH MISSIONARIES THAT ONE BRITISH AND FOUR SPANISH JOURNALISTS DETAINED IN KOLWEZI BY ZAIRIAN AUTHORITIES ON APRIL 27. GROUP APPARENTLY DROVE CAR TO NORTHWEST CORNER OF ZAMBIA AND HIKE TO MUTSHATSHA IN SEARCH OF STORY BEHIND INVADERS' LINES. THEY ARRIVED IN MUTSHATSHA IN TIME TO BE MET BY REOCCUPYING FAZ FORCE WHICH ARRESTED THEM AND SENT THEM TO KOLWEZI PRISON.

2. ARRESTED JOURNALISTS ARE: (1) U.K. CITIZEN COLIN SMITH OF LONDON OBSERVER; (2) SPANISH CITIZENS BENITO IGLESIAS; (3) JUAN MANUEL; (4) JESUS ALVARO; AND (5) XAVIER GARCIA LLANAS. ALL SPANIARDS ARE TV FILM CREW POSSIBLY ASSOCIATED WITH RTVE.

3. BRITISH HONORARY CONSUL IN LUBUMBASHI INFORMED OF SITUATION
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PAGE 02 LUBUMB 00244 041456Z

ON MAY 2 AND RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS ON MAY 3 TO VISIT BRITISH JOURNALIST. HE DEPARTED SAME AFTERNOON BY PLANE AND MET WITH SMITH AND OTHERS IN KOLWEZI PRISON ON MAY 4. HONORARY CONSUL REPORTED THAT SMITH DISHEVELLED BUT WELL-FED, UNHAPPY ABOUT PRISON CONDITIONS, BUT OTHERWISE IN GOOD SPIRITS. STATEMENTS WERE SIGNED BY JOURNALISTS, BUT NONE SURE OF NATURE OF STATEMENT BECAUSE NONE FLUENT IN FRENCH. COMMANDING GENERAL SAID DETAINEES

WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO KINSHASA ON MAY 4 OR 5. NO INFORMATION ABOUT CHARGES, BUT GENERAL REFERRED TO DETAINEES AS JOURNALISTS RATHER THAN SPIES.

4. BRITISH HONORARY CONSUL SUBMITTED COMPLETED REPORT TO BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN KINSHASA ON MAY 4.

5. ALTHOUGH SPANISH AMBASSADOR IN LUBUMBASHI ON MAY 3, HE DID NOT LEARN OF DETAINEES UNTIL HE WAS ENROUTE TO AIRPORT AND THEN WITHOUT NAMES OF SPANISH SUBJECTS.

6. FOR LONDON: INFORMATION IN PARAGRAPH THREE FROM REPORT OF BRITISH CONSUL AND SHOULD BE USED DISCREETLY IF DISCUSSING SUBJECT WITH BRITISH OFFICIALS.

7. FOR KINSHASA: BRITISH CONSUL ALSO STATED SMITH WANTED TO KNOW WHAT AMERICANS WERE DOING TO SECURE HIS RELEASE, SAYING THAT LONDON OBSERVER WAS AMERICAN-OWNED PUBLICATION. CONSUL SAID HE RESPONDED BY SAYING HE WAS UNAWARE OF NATIONALITY OF OBSERVER OWNERS. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO INFORM SPANISH AMBASSADOR OF NAMES OF SPANISH SUBJECTS AND LATEST DEVELOPMENTS.
BORG

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Message Attributes

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